Success in the Insurgency: The Population

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"Success in the Insurgency: The Population"
Submitted by Captain Adisa T. King
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Military tactics and hardware are all well and good, but they are really quite useless if one has lost confidence of the population among whom one is fighting.

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Bernard Fall[1]
Introduction to *Modern Warfare*

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MODERN WARFARE

As urban areas increase around the world, military operations other than war (MOOTW), military operation in urban terrain (MOUT), Counterinsurgency, and Security and Stability Operations (SASO) define modern warfare. Unlike warfare fought with defined lines and enemies during WW II and the Persian Gulf, the current SASO environment and counterinsurgency in Iraq places insurgents who depend on the population to hide their identities against a greater military power- the U.S. military and coalition forces. Defeating a faceless insurgent that manipulates the population makes modern warfare complex. Therefore, modern warfare requires that the allegiance of the civilian population become one of the most vital objectives in attempting to defeat insurgent leaders.

INTRODUCTION

History, lessons learned, and research have provided direction for military leaders in developing ways to defeat

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[1] Frank Tranquier, *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964), ix.

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the insurgent leaders. Because the insurgent is fighting in his country, his human intelligence (HUMINT) can be greater than U.S. intelligence despite our technology. In order to succeed in Security and Stability Operations (SASO) against the insurgency in Iraqi, the U.S. military must develop focused planning that addresses the allegiance of the local Iraqi population. As such, the US Military should augment products focused on population relationships within the Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB). This could assist commanders in dealing with complexities of military operations in an urban environment. Finally, unity of effort among U.S. forces and coalition forces creates the link that binds strategic policy to operational plans and tactical action on the battlefield.

AUGMENTING INTELLIGENCE ON THE BATTLEFIELD

In the [i]nterdependence of nations, any residual grievances within the population...will be brought by determined adversaries into the framework.[2] The "framework" referenced above is the battlespace that must be known, described, and understood. In the traditional sense of IPB, staff officers use ratios and relative combat power analysis to determine the number of tanks, soldiers, aircraft, and the equipment to determine battlespace they

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[2] Tranquier, 9.

will fight. The four step IPB process of defining the battlefield environment, describing the battlefield effects, evaluating the threat, and determining threat course of actions (COAs) assist the staff and commander against conventional forces. Although IPB is a continuous process, fighting insurgents adds a different and difficult dimension to the battle. Because insurgents utilize their own people and communities in the fight, there are no real front lines to the battle.

Jamison Melby and Russell Glen's *Street Smart* provide products that help define and shape the environment as it relates to the populace. For instance, the relationship matrix demonstrates graphically how each component in the city interacts and the continuum of relative interest describes the possible threats and allies within the population.[3] The matrix describes several categories of a relationship: adversary, friendly, possible collusion, possible confrontation, and dependent.

As LtCol Dan O'Donahue, commander of 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines in OIF I and Division staff officer for 1st Marine Division in OIF II in the Al Anbar province explained in an interview how "all politics were local and the interest of

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[3] Jamison Melby and Russell Glen. *Street Smart: Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield for Urban Operations.* California: RAND, 2002, pg 63. This matrix is one of many products that the authors introduce to assist commanders in shaping the battlefield and mission success.

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people varied from city to city and province to province,"[4] the relationship matrix can provide intelligence about key individuals within the populace. For example, the Shiite cleric Ayat Allah Ali al-Sistani and the Iraqi Governing Council have been in constant dialogue, which establishes a relationship that commanders can use against the followers of Muqtada al-Sadr and other insurgents.[5] A critical vulnerability exists in the insurgents because Ali al-Sistani does not believe in *wilayat al-faqih* [the right of Islamic jurists to rule] and Muqtada al-Sadar does. This difference demonstrates a possible collusion with the Iraqi government and a possible confrontation with al-Sadar's insurgents. The relationship matrix augments the IPB through identifying key personnel that U.S. forces can target to help achieve mission success.

Other tools that augment the IPB process that focuses on the population are a census and an identification card system. The continuum of relative interest begins the process of identifying enemy by understanding the intent of individuals or groups in a population; however, insurgents' strength is their anonymity. Therefore, the U.S. military

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[4] Interview with Lieutenant Colonel Dan O'Donahue, USMC, commanded 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines in OIF I and served as an division staff officer in OIF II with 1st Marine Division in the Al Anbar province of Iraqi, Quantico, Virginia, 17 December 2004.
[5] Internet http://www.worldpress.org/Mideast/1773.cfm

must attack it to "undermine the relationships between insurgents and the population."[6] More importantly, the U.S. military must "enlist the participation of the populace [which can help in the] arrest of dangerous individuals."[7] The focal point of the census and I.D. system is to give Iraqis a national identity along with identifying insurgents and their supporters.

UNITY OF EFFORT

Clearly, more than any other kind of warfare, counterinsurgency must respect one principle of single direction.[8] Unity of effort among U.S. and coalition forces strengthen commanders' abilities to addresses the population. On the strategic and operational level, all efforts concentrating on national policy and operations must focus efforts to achieve political legitimacy and demonstrate to the Iraqis, the International community, and the American public the U.S. Military purpose. For example, General John Abazaid, commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) stated that the winning strategy in Iraqi

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[6] John Anderson. "Attacking foes' anonymity," *Armed Forces Journal,* January 2005, pg 36. This article proposes a conceptual plan that would use technology along with human sources to help identify insurgents' moves.
[7] Trinquier, 32.
[8] David Galula, 87.

is for "Islam to isolate Salfist[9] vanguard from ordinary Muslims [population] who want a better and freer life that prosperity and connectedness can bring."[10] Isolating the religious extremist and convincing the average Muslim that peaceful coexistence is possible shapes an environment where security is present and construction projects and infrastructure can be established. Furthermore, the population will have what LtCol O'Donahue calls a "common cause"[11] in the new order that is going to be in Iraq.

Tactically, sufficient relief in place (RIP) procedures allows a unity in effort that focuses on the population. "Prior to RIP operations [i]t is critical to identify who the players are as you start developing trust,"[12] because the relationship established with the populace needs to be carried over with the replacing unit. Why? The following needs to be determined to maintain the continuity of RIP: reliability of intelligence, infrastructure needs, progress of on-going projects, and knowledge of daily activities in one particular town. For instance, the April 2004 rise in attacks by the insurgency

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[9] Salfist jihadist is a term for the Muslim fundamentalists who use violent tactics to try to re-create what they imagine was the pure and perfect Islamic government of the era of the prophet Muhammad, who is called the "Salaf."
[10] David Igantius, "Achieving Real Victory Could Take Decades." *Washington Post*, 26 December 2004, B1.
[11] LtCol O'Donahue.
[12] LtCol O'Donahue.

in Al-Anbar province was a surprise to the 82nd Airborne (ABN) unit who was replaced by Marine units from 1st Marine Division in Al Anbar Province of Iraq. The RIP created a gap or "seam" that insurgents exploited, which became the deadliest month for 7th and 4th Marines casualties-nineteen and ten, respectively.[13]

The casualties do not suggest a sufficient or insufficient RIP; however, a new unit with a different perspective on the operation could have given insurgents the opportunity they were seeking. Therefore, maintaining continuity between Marine and Army forces as well as U.S. forces and coalition forces is vital to the U.S. military as well as to the population of Iraq. Maintaining or building on the continuity could have provided HUMINT on potential attacks. A probable lesson learned is to ensure Marines conduct RIPs with Marines and Army units with each other. Unfortunately, "[t]here are no recipes for achieving a complete [unity of effort]; however, [U.S. and Coalition Forces]--need to find the recipe on: When is the best time to rotate."[14] Nonetheless, the most important factor in the equation is ensuring all actions focus on winning over the Iraqi people. The U.S. Military and coalition forces

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[13] http://www.marzone.com/7thMarines/7th_Marine_Casualties_Iraq.htm
[14] Interview with Ellison, Major, USMC on 16 December 2004 at Quantico, VA.

legitimacy rests on winning the support of the Iraqi
populace.

CONCLUSION

The heart of the insurgency is the population;
therefore the "central tenet of counterinsurgency: winning
the allegiance of the indigenous population" is vital.
Technology plays a role within a SASO environment, but
augmenting the battlefield with tools that help commanders
identify threats and all possible links within the
population acts as a better combat multiplier of greater
value than a laser guided bomb. The relationship matrix and
continuum of relative interest assist commanders in
isolating insurgents and establish shaping operations that
address the needs of the population: security and
normality. Above all, unity of effort among U.S. military
as well as coalition forces provides the population with a
seamless effort instead of a framework of contradictions.
The seamless effort builds confidence in the population's
belief on the U.S. Military and Coalition forces ability to
help Iraqis return to normal life. Underestimating these
effects could result in parts of the population supporting
the insurgents.

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